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January 22, 2008

Victoria Rutson
 Chief of the Section of Environmental Analysis
 Surface Transportation Board
 395 E Street, SW
 Washington, D.C. 20423

Re: Finance Docket No. 35087

**Proposed Acquisition of Elgin Joliet and Eastern Railway ("EJ&E")
 by Canadian National ("CN") Railway**

Dear Ms. Rutson:

We strongly object to the proposed acquisition of the EJ&E by CN. If this transaction is approved and completed, the negative repercussions will be dramatic and irreversible. We offer the following specific reasons for our objection:

- **Noise** – The quality of life will be diminished on an immeasurable scale. This will have a huge negative impact on the local economy due to decreased real estate values and harm to future economic development. The noise issue goes well beyond being an inconvenience issue.
- **Vibration** – The damage to nearby structures will be rapid and enormous. The great increase in engine power and train length will be responsible for far reaching harm. Can CN afford the monumental financial liability to compensate property owners for the doubtless damage soon to be caused by their trains?
- **Traffic** – Increasing the number of trains on the EJ&E line by possibly 500% will have a cataclysmic effect on the entire region. Local businesses will suffer and emergency vehicles will be delayed on a DAILY BASIS. School buses will not only suffer delays, but the chances for traffic fatalities will increase substantially. The very real potential cost of human lives is nothing to be ignored.

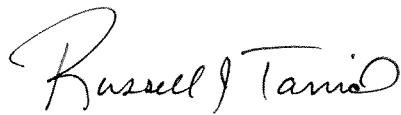
Surface Transportation Board
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- **Pollution** – The disastrous effect of larger, heavier, more frequent trains on centuries-old forests will be irreversible. The EJ&E line currently runs through an area of Frankfort that contains trees well over 200 years old. The impact of these much larger trains at much more frequent intervals will cause major damage to these trees. This is not just an aesthetic or historical point. The oxygen these trees provide, along with the wind suppression and protection against soil erosion have a tremendous impact on the ecosystem. In addition, the idling vehicle traffic caused by the increased train traffic will further damage the trees and other vegetation.
- **Environment** – The noise, traffic, and vibrations the proposed acquisition would bring will have such a negative impact on the natural environment along the route, the results will be tragic and irreversible. In this enlightened time of better understanding of how we all must be caretakers for our environment, such a violent shock to our local ecosystems would be unforgivable. Many nature preserves abut the EJ&E tracks. This must be taken into account.
- **Safety** – This point relates to more than increased accidents at grade crossings. And as former railroad employees, we can assure you the accident rate will rise dramatically regardless of the number of safety features in place. But further, the safety issue also is relevant to non-grade crossings. CN plans to carry hazardous materials along a line that runs next to residential communities, schools, churches and industries. In fact, in the Prestwick neighborhood of Frankfort in which we live, the integrity of the ground beneath the tracks is questionable. The damage is too great to risk in exchange for supposed non-existent economic benefit.
- **Benefits to Other Communities** – CN claims one of the biggest benefits to the acquisition will be the decreased train traffic through the communities their trains currently run through. A closer look at this point destroys their argument. The number of trains currently going through any given community is a tiny fraction of what will be concentrated along one line. The benefits to the current communities will be so minimal as to be impossible to measure. However, the negative impact to the NEW communities affected will be enormous. The argument that the detrimental impact on the EJ&E line will be offset by the positive impact on other communities is specious.

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In conclusion, we feel the STB has no responsible choice but to REJECT the proposed acquisition. There is absolutely no question that the alleged benefits of such a transaction are greatly outnumbered by the very real and inevitable negative repercussions that will occur. Please take these points under the most careful consideration. Lives and livelihoods will be affected by your decisions. We trust you will do the right thing.

Sincerely,



Russell J. Tarvid



Donna M. Tarvid

cc: Mayor Jim Holland
Village of Frankfort

Eric Hirschhorn
Winston & Strawn